

SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH

DEVOTED TO THE ILLUSTRATION OF SPIRITUAL INTERCOURSE.

"THE AGITATION OF THOUGHT IS THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM."

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WHOLE NO. 103.

The Principles of Nature.

THE LATTER DAY DISPENSATION:

Being a Lecture on Spiritualism, delivered at Keokuk, Iowa, Feb. 10, 1854, by Richard Haddon.

The subject to which I would invite your attention is one of the utmost importance to the human race; it is a question which involves the dearest interests of humanity; it is a question upon which is suspended the wishes, the hopes, and all the highest aspirations of intelligent, rational beings; the proofs of man's immortality, or the evidence that there is another and a higher state of existence for the human spirit after the material form which it now inhabits shall be decomposed and resolved into its primal elements.

For these proofs, sages and philosophers in every age of the world have sought with anxious and mournful solicitude; kings, there have been, who would have exchanged their crowns for a certain knowledge on this point; and there is not, probably, one among us here who has not felt an unutterable longing to know, with unmistakable certainty, that the dead who have passed from our sight still live, still remember, and still love us.

Nature has been questioned, tradition has been explored, and science has sought by every possible analysis of matter and mind to find an answer—to find some test by which to prove the indestructibility of the thinking principle; reason has aided the investigation, and yet nothing but presumptive evidences have been evolved from the long and wearisome search; and the most sincere inquirers have still remained in trembling uncertainty in regard to this momentous question.

But a new era has now dawned on our race! the darkness and mystery which overshadowed the valley of death has receded, and light from beyond the portals of the tomb has poured upon the benighted and bewildered inhabitants of earth.

Each anxious doubt may now be removed, and every individual may convince himself by actual demonstration that he is an heir of immortality, and a brother to the angels.

In discussing this subject there are three particular points to which I would direct your attention:

First. The importance to the human mind that it should be rationally convinced by adequate evidence of its own eternal nature and glorious destination.

Second. The inadequacy of all traditions, creeds, and theories to plant in the soul of man such a conviction of these facts as thereby to develop his spiritual faculties and bring forward the race to that degree of elevation of which it is susceptible.

Third. The influence of the new philosophy which has resulted from the spiritual manifestations.

In regard to the first point, then, nothing is more obvious than the fact that a man's conduct and feelings are powerfully affected by the opinion which he entertains of himself, of his Maker, and of the object and duration of his existence. Blot from his mind all hope or expectation of a hereafter; convince him that he is indeed a worm, with no interest beyond the present life—no capacities for higher joys or higher knowledge than this earthly scene affords—and you annihilate all motive for improvement, all principle of right, and sink him into an abyss of degradation and despondency. On the other hand, could you give to any mind the full assurance of that which it rather *hopes* than *believes*—the assurance that its existence shall be perpetuated throughout eternity; that its capacities are infinite; that its treasures in the unseen world are exhaustless; how would such a mind *nerve itself*; how exalted would be its aspirations; how vigorous its exertions to expand and unfold those immortal faculties!

Nature has always whispered to man the secret of a future life; reason has presumed it; and it is to this divine instinct that we owe all the elevation, all the moral development to which we have yet attained.

But the lack of positive knowledge on this subject has retarded man's spiritual growth; has bent him earthward; and he will never cease to grovel while a doubt of his immortality remains, or while he fails to comprehend the object of his mission on earth. As long as death is viewed as the "king of terrors," and a future state as an *uncertainty*, so long will man bend all his thoughts and energies to this passing scene; so long will he bury all his God-like faculties; so long will the animal nature preponderate over the spiritual; and misery, crime, and degradation prevail throughout the earth.

It is true that the most barbarous nations have some faint and indistinct conceptions of a future state; but not having yet progressed to a knowledge of the laws which control the physical and spiritual creation, their ideas are extremely limited, their vision distorted and imperfect, and hence their slow and almost imperceptible advancement to a state of refinement and elevation.

Were each and every mind in this enlightened land but thoroughly convinced of its immortality, and at the same time thoroughly conscious of the nature of those divine endowments, which, when unfolded, make man an angel, how changed, how glorious would be the moral aspect of things! All the ardor,

the energy, the anxiety which is now expended in the pursuit of trash and toys would be directed heavenward; the now inverted faculties of the soul would, like the towering flame, point upward to the skies, and love and wisdom would descend and fill every heart.

"Immortal! what can strike the sense so strong
As this, the soul! It thunders to the thought!
Roused at the sound the exulting soul ascends
And breathes her native air; an air that feeds
Ambitions high, and fans ethereal fires!
Quick kindles all that is divine within us,
Nor leaves one lingering thought below the stars."

I am aware that the mass of mankind profess to believe in a future and eternal state of existence, and doubtless most of them seriously imagine that they do believe it; but what I now wish to illustrate is the impossibility of *fully satisfying* the mind with any thing but *absolute knowledge* derived from tangible evidence. I might, perhaps, except a certain class of minds who never doubt any thing which they have been taught, for such minds *never think, never reason, never progress*. But could the thoughts of all men be laid open, you would doubtless be astonished at the amount of skepticism which prevails both in the Church and out of it; and you would discover that it is among the highest order of intellect that the greatest amount of skepticism exists; for while the uninformed and unthinking repose their faith upon the traditions of former ages, the more expanded and discriminating mind finds difficulties and objections which are wholly unseen by those below its plane of thought.

The strong and comprehensive intellect, taking its survey from the highest point of observation, looks over the long line of departed ages and traces in their historic records the origin and progress of all religions, all creeds, all systems of philosophy. It observes the various changes and modifications which these creeds and systems have undergone, as science, art, and literature have advanced among men; and he is forced to the unavoidable conclusion that they are all of human origin. He sees the Hindoo, the Turk, the Persian, each claspings to his bosom a sacred book, which he esteems a revelation; and although these revelations might shock and disgust the superior intelligence of the Christian, yet the devotee of each sacred volume most sincerely believes that all who reject it are fit only for the fires of Tartarus.

While contemplating the various traditions, rites, and superstitions of the nations that people the globe, he discovers the obvious analogy which they all bear to each other; and he finds in no one of them those proofs of divine authenticity which they all claim; and those manuscripts which the Catholic bishops at Nice pronounced the word of God are no more sacred in his view than the *Shuster* or the *Koran*.

To him the Mosaic account of creation is as full of absurdities as is the story of Mohammed's journey to heaven on the back of the angel Gabriel; and he is no more accountable for being unable to believe the one than the other. He looks downward into the structure of the globe, and geology contradicts the records of tradition; he looks upward to the starry heavens, and astronomy stands opposed to the Bible history of creation. On every side he finds insurmountable barriers to that faith which weaker minds adopt without examining. Something more than all antiquity can furnish is needed to rend away the veil which hides the future from man's longing eye.

It has been asserted again and again, in reference to the Spirit-manifestations, that we need no such demonstrations; that the Bible reveals every thing which we ought to know; and that it is highly presumptuous and daring to seek for further knowledge on this subject. Does not this remind you of the popish edict which imprisoned Galileo for inventing the telescope and asserting in the face of all tradition that the world was round, when his holiness knew that it was *flat*?

Look over the civilized world! look through the Christian Church, and then answer me if nothing is needed to rouse mankind from spiritual lethargy and save the thinking mind from utter skepticism.

What is the Church of the nineteenth century? An empty name—a lifeless form, with an embodiment of absurd doctrines and ceremonies which are about as much understood or cared for by the majority of its members as is the geography of the moon. What is the influence of such an organization upon the world? An organization professing to be the light of the world—professing to have received a divine and infallible revelation which comprehends a knowledge of the attributes of the Creator, a history of the creation, and of God's dealings with men in every age of the world, while this same history contains *absurdities and impossibilities* absolutely shocking to an enlightened mind, and wholly repugnant to every rational idea of an *infinite God*; and while a vast majority of the members of this organization exhibit in every department of life all the *recklessness*, all the *indifference*, all the *obliquity* which men of the world exhibit, so much so that it is impossible to distinguish them either by their tempers, their habits, or their moral principles.

As for those few among them who are exceptions, I can point you to as many or more equally honest, benevolent, hum-

ble, and praiseworthy individuals who have no particular faith in the Church or its doctrines. Indeed, I can point you to some of the noblest men who have lived in the departing age; men who were the benefactors of their race—whose moral characters will ever shine on the page of history, and to whose moral and intellectual greatness we owe in part our national existence, who were *disbelievers* in all the outward forms of Christianity.

But there is one thing which has distinguished the Church in all ages, and it is also a distinguishing characteristic of all the religions of the earth. *This thing is bigotry*. And it is to destroy this hydra-headed monster, this demon of cruelty, that the impending revolution of the religious world is forthcoming. A glance at the history of nations is all that is necessary to convince you that more than half the miseries and horrors that have darkened this mortal sphere are the legitimate effects of the religious creeds which have for thousands of years enslaved the minds of men.

For ages Europe has been bathed in blood. First the Pagan and Christian, then the Catholic and Protestant, and afterward the various dissenting sects, have persecuted each other with uniring zeal; and although the fire and sword are no longer the tolerated instruments for compelling men's consciences, yet the persecuting spirit still exists; the same in kind though differing in degree and restrained in its influence by republican principles and the gradual disenthralment of the faculty of reason. Yet modified and restrained as it is, this sectarian spirit is still a withering blight on human happiness—a secret poison working a pernicious influence on society—chilling the heart's sympathies, and alienating man from his brother man.

Of all the evils which have enslaved and degraded humanity since the world began, there has not been one so baleful in its influence, so extensive in its effects, so hopeless of a remedy as that *insane tendency* of the mind to adhere with silly obstinacy to ancient errors; that *self-infallibility* which assumes the right to *denies to others* and forbids the free investigation of those questions which involve man's highest interests.

The intolerant spirit which prompts the Protestant Christian to look with cold contempt upon his neighbor of a different faith is *identically the same* as that which instigates the haughty Mussulman who thinks—

"Through unbelievers' blood
Lies his directest path to heaven."

It is the same that lighted the martyr's flame and invented the tortures of the inquisition; and although it can not here take vengeance on the corporeal frame, yet it gladly inflicts its tortures on the mind; and to the utmost extent of its power it seeks in one way or another to punish the audacity which dares to doubt, or to adopt another faith. Look through every grade of society in this free republic and behold the workings of the tyrant *Bigotry*. Listen to the din of strife of sect with sect; the war of words; the malignant assaults upon character; the misrepresentations; the anathemas which the champions of opposing creeds hurl at each other. See brother estranged from brother, friend alienated from friend, neighbor disturbing neighbor. Even where but a slight difference of opinion exists, each has some favorite dogma, some theological idol which he worships, and to which he would, if possible, compel all mankind to bow the knee.

With such a man the unpardonable sin is to reject his favorite *ism*; he assumes the authority of judge toward such heretics, and declares that it is only the deep depravity of the heart which prevents them from seeing the truth as he sees it. He deems it unlikely that such souls will be saved, and fancying that God is extremely angry with them, he very naturally imbibes the feeling of animosity which he thinks his Creator is indulging, and with manifold self-complacency makes a merit of his pious hatred, and esteems himself a greater saint for the enmity which he is thus cherishing toward a fellow-being, while *education*, perhaps, made all the difference in their opinions.

It is an undeniable truth that those peculiar doctrines, styled orthodox, have a baneful influence on the moral sensibilities of men. They destroy the feeling of universal brotherhood; they beget a feeling of self-righteousness, of exclusiveness, of cruelty, by teaching that the Creator is vindictive and cruel; by representing a portion of the human race as destined to everlasting anguish under the relentless wrath of him who called them into being. The man who believes or fancies he believes such horrible dogmas must necessarily assimilate in some degree to the character which he ascribes to God; he can not look upon the human world believing the majority justly doomed to such an awful fate, while he and a choice few are excepted, without cherishing a selfish hardness of heart; for while this belief flatters his pride it chills his love of humanity; and this one peculiar article in Christian and Pagan creeds is the main root from whence have sprung all the religious persecutions and cruelties which have deluged the world with blood. Nothing is too cruel for a man to do in defending his faith as long as he believes his God is infinite in cruelty; and it is to the genius of *republicanism*, not to *Luther's reformation*, that we owe that freedom of thought

and speech which allows an honest man to utter his honest convictions.

But the world is progressing. And the Church, too, is progressing. As knowledge, the offspring of liberty, has increased, *theology* has thrown away many of its once precious idols. Infant damnation has disappeared from its temple, and *reprobation* is nowhere to be found. Gehenna, or the place of punishment for the wicked, has been remodeled and changed into quite a different thing from what it was a century ago; and instead of resorting to the halter or to the whip to punish the heterodox believer, *scorn* and *contempt* are now the popular instruments of conviction.

Now, my friends, I would ask you again, What is the influence which the Church (taking into view its whole history and present aspect) can have in establishing in the thinking mind any permanent belief in the soul's immortality? The history of Christianity proves what the history of all religions prove, that there is an instinct universal to mankind which is the origin of all these various religions, and this instinct affords a presumptive evidence of a future state; but the claim which each religion maintains of a special revelation, while no authority can be given for such a claim, and while each pretended revelation contains absurdities too great for the present age, has a tendency rather to destroy than confirm the whispering of this instinct within us.

Thus you will discover the reason why many of the most brilliant intellects of the age gone by were infidels. It was not from any perversity of their moral nature, but it was owing to that superior discrimination which discovered to them the *insufficiency* of that evidence which rested only on tradition. It is indeed very unpopular to dissent from long-established opinions, and therefore you are not aware of the amount of unbelief which now haunts in secret the minds of men.

But we will now pass to a consideration of the spiritual manifestations, and the influence which they are destined to have on the happiness and elevation of mankind. It would be superfluous to bring an argument here to prove that such manifestations *do occur*, and in a manner, too, which has set suspicion forever at rest. The most inveterate opposers have laid by the word *kumbugy*, and no man, who is half informed on the subject, will hazard his reputation for common sense, by talking of *jugglery* or *imposition*. No; there is but one alternative to which to resort, and to this alternative the most scientific and religious investigators are driven: that it is from the Spirits of the dead or from the *devil*. But I must here say, if it is from the latter, he is a much better friend to mankind than was ever supposed; and instead of "walking about the earth seeking whom he may devour," he has been, for the last two or three years, very busy healing the sick, restoring sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, and making the lame to walk; while the lessons of love and wisdom which he is teaching to men are *very unlike* what we should have expected from one of his reputation. He pleads the cause of the slave; commands us to throw away our rum; to forsake all iniquity, to be kind and charitable to one another. And he has induced hundreds and thousands to do so; he has roused many unthinking minds to a sense of their duty, and taught them to live on earth a holier life, by making them to understand the philosophy of happiness.

Strange, indeed, that all these things should come from an evil spirit! It is indeed for the interest of the clergy to impress the people with this idea, for the clergy understand very well that these new developments are destined to demolish their systems of divinity, and do away with the order of priesthood. What, then, is to become of all that army of learned and unlearned ministers, who are sustained by the labor of the toiling part of community, who spend their lives in ease while we are earning their bread, that they may get up in the pulpit on Sunday and *instruct us in that which they know nothing about*? We want no such men. We have revered them long enough. And while they have been making creeds for us to believe, we were just as capable of making our own. We have the Bible in our hands, are just as good judges of its contents as they are; for while the divines of different sects are explaining their doctrines to us, they are quarreling and disputing about them with *each other*. Each declares that there is absurdity in every creed but his own; thus convincing us that there is absurdity in them all.

It is to do away with these things, that these new developments are unfolding; and to give us in their stead a rational and intelligible theology, something which every body can understand, and which, when understood, *will be practiced*.

I do not wish you to infer that I think there is nothing good in the old theology. There is something, the essence of which will remain when all those doctrines and ordinances which have mystified Christianity shall have passed away. The precepts of Christ, which were all embodied in the sentence, "Do unto others as ye would they should do unto you," were spoken by inspiration; and it was the same inspiration which caused Pythagoras, Confucius, and Socrates to utter the same hundreds of years before. And I believe it is the same inspiration which is now illuminating the minds

of Andrew Jackson Davis, Judge Edmonds, Hon. Warren Chase, and many others who are traveling through this land rousing up the slumbering souls of men, convincing them of their immortality, and teaching them the science of true life.

You have only to read the array of facts of which these men are the witnesses, to be convinced that there is a spiritual influence manifesting itself to the inhabitants of earth, that spiritual beings are around us, with us, sympathizing in all our thoughts, and laboring to guide us upward to higher attainments.

But, perhaps, you are ready to ask the question which has so often been asked, "Why do Spirits manifest themselves in such strange ways? Why are they knocking and shoving about tables?" I would reply, "Spirits seek such modes of communications as are *most feasible*. They, like us, are subject to the universal laws of nature. It is not by any *miracle* that they approach us, but by adapting their modes of communication to the *conditions* by which we are surrounded. Their object is to give us a *test* of their presence. But since men have listened and responded to their calls, they have found many ways of manifesting their presence and of proving their identity.

They have been *seen, heard, felt*, as distinctly, as unmistakably as we see or hear any thing else; and without the aid of any human hand they have brought forth from various instruments music, sweeter, more entrancing, than any living artist could give.

But you do not believe this, though you have it from the testimony of men of unimpeachable veracity. And yet you believe stories found in a book written two, three, or four thousand years ago, and by whom *nobody knows*. You believe that because your *forefathers did*; and your forefathers believed that the sun traveled round this little earth.

Is not that testimony which comes within our own age, within our own sphere of observation, a thousand times stronger than that which has traveled down to us from remote ages? Most assuredly it is. And nothing but an inflexible determination *not* to believe, can resist the evidence which is at this time pouring upon us from every quarter. But you are not called upon to believe this man or that; you may experiment for yourself, for it is in every man's power to find, between himself and the spiritual world, a channel of communication.

But it is often asked, "What good does it do? and who is made better by it? And this inquiry is made by those who confess they have seen nothing of it, and will not take the trouble to inform themselves concerning it. To such I would say, "Make yourselves acquainted with the subject. Learn the number of the sick, blind, deaf, lame who have been restored to health and sight by spiritual influence; learn the number of dejected, melancholy, despairing souls who have looked into the grave as it closed over their nearest and dearest friends, and *felt the pang of eternal separation*, while a cloud of impenetrable darkness rested upon their hopes; until, through these new developments, the light of immortality shone upon that darkness; until they heard, vibrating from the Spirit-world, sounds fraught with life and intelligence. Look at the tears of joy rolling down their cheeks, and listen to the sobs of ecstasy heaving the bosom which is ready to burst with its weight of bliss, while the hand grasps again the hand and feels the presence of those dear ones it mourned as lost. *Nothing else* could have removed their doubts and given them that assurance which they now feel of a reunion hereafter—an assurance that all those tender and sacred ties which endear and ennoble this earthly life will be renewed and perpetuated throughout eternity. And what, I ask you, can exert so powerful an influence on the moral feelings and conduct of a man as to be thus brought into that near and sensible communion with the celestial world, to know in the depth of his own soul that spiritual beings are constantly around him, awaiting his entrance into their sphere, urging him to self-improvement, and ever ready to aid his exertions?

But what do Spirits teach us? What is the *argument* by which they induce us to become good and wise? *Not* by exciting our terrors, by a terrific description of a place of torment, or by representing our heavenly Father as full of vengeance and ready to tear us to pieces. No; these arguments have been tried for thousands of years, and their influence has failed alike on savage and civilized man. They can not reach those inborn affections of the soul from whence spring the motions of all action.

Spirits teach us *self-knowledge*. They unfold to man his position in the universe. They unfold to his comprehension those moral laws on which his elevation and happiness depend; they teach him to love his fellow-man; to exclude *none* from his affections, for *all* are the children of one great Spirit-Father; they teach him humility; they bid him labor for the elevation of mankind, and instead of turning his back coldly upon a weak or guilty brother, to win him by a kind and gentle influence to know and pursue his own highest good. Spirits tell us that just in proportion as the love principle is developed within us, will be our happiness here

SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH.

S. B. BRITTAN, EDITOR.

"Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, APRIL 22, 1854.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Persons who send communications intended for the press should, if they desire to preserve them, invariably retain a copy, so as to preclude the necessity for our returning them in case they are not published. Among the mass of rejected papers they are extremely liable to be lost, and we can not be responsible for the safe keeping of communications which, in our judgment, are of no value.

THE SECTARIAN HYDRA.

Nothing has done so much to subvert the true faith and to materialize the world's worship, as the existence and growth of Sectarianism in the churches. The disposition to adopt some sharply defined standard of opinion, and to force its acceptance by making it the criterion of general faith and fellowship, has chilled the warm and generous impulses of human nature, sensualized its devotions, checked the noblest aspirations of men after a divine ideal, and paralyzed the greatest reforms of the past and the present. And still, to a very great extent, men are divided by partition walls as high and holy in the estimation of their builders, as the sanctions of Religion and Heaven. These walls are the great barriers to human progress, and they must be thrown down; not to give place to others as high, as cold, and as stony, and withal as invulnerable to all human sympathy and fraternal cooperation, but that the foundations of ancient error, and the tyranny of "outrageous custom" may be removed, to the end that human beings and human interests may flow together like the waters when "the fountains of the great deep were broken up."

In any reference to the prominent divisions of the Christian Church which may occur under this head, it is proper to observe, that the application of our remarks must be restricted to them in their *sectarian aspects and character*. If we were to portray Sectarianism as it appears to us, we should make as ugly a beast as the one which John saw. Indeed, it might look much worse, for it would have many more heads and horns which, whatever other uses they might be supposed to subserve, they certainly would not be particularly ornamental. Sectarianism is one beast, though its heads are many and highly diversified in form and expression. The monster rises amid the sea of the sects as the ancient hydra rose in the lake of Lerna, and to future ages its actual history may seem to be as fabulous. But to those who have seen the creature, and have studied its habits as we have, and been pushed with its horns, the modern hydra is no fable. It is a real beast, and though it can not be found in the Zoological Gardens, it may be seen in all the churches. Those "who have received his mark" are wont to feed and water the creature with the utmost care. As he is not naturally beautiful or attractive to an unpurported, natural instinct, every effort is made to render him less repulsive in appearance than he is in fact. Those who conduct the exhibition clothe the animal in beautiful drapery, and place him in a gilded stall, but the people are required to view the same at that precise distance which precludes a close inspection, while it

—lends enchantment to the view.

We have been favored with remarkable opportunities for studying the nature of this beast, having seen all his heads and horns. The heads are widely diversified in their general appearance and particular aspect. The Presbyterian head is surrounded by a murky atmosphere which looks like the vaporized horrors of reprobation. The head is lofty, and the attitude proud and commanding, while its gentle smiles are the revelations of approaching judgments. The head which represents the Methodist form of sectarianism, presents an appearance of far greater meekness and more generous feeling, but it belongs to the same beast after all, and its life-blood is poisoned by the same virus. The Episcopal sectarian sensorium is erect and stately as a giraffe, and its general appearance is extremely elegant and classical, but it sustains a very intimate relation to the head of the beast. The monster has a conspicuous place in the Baptist Church also, and there he looks cold, stern, and terrible, as if the head were a duplicate of the one first described. The Universalist embodiment of sectarianism is younger, and rather better looking—in the judgment of those who think so. For a long time it smiled graciously on us, and we felt quite sure that this head at least had no horns. However, we were enabled to perceive our mistake about the time that we discovered the horns of the beast. This head appears to have the faculty, peculiar to itself, of dropping the symbols of its power—giving its horns a horizontal position—that they may not be perceived by ordinary observers. But where there is an opportunity to gore some inferior beast, the horns straightway assume an erect position, and we find that the power of the hydra is here also. The head which represents *Materialism* is ossified, and the horns have quite recently been broken off by the SPIRITUAL RAPPINGS. The beast has many smaller heads, but they need not be described. Ignorance, pride, and selfishness are the sources from which they are nourished and developed. Notwithstanding all draw their life from the same fountain, the different heads assume hostile attitudes, and strike at each other with determined energy and intent to kill. According to an inspired poet, mutual destruction is their appropriate mission.

God leaves the sects like wolves to eat each other;
Each sectary sees, in wolf-like shape his brother,
And hunts him to the death, and laps his blood,
And grows delirious from that human food,
Drives his own fangs in his own poisoned veins,
And his own life-blood drains.

Evil subtils in ceaseless strife and hate;
This is its final fate:
Left to itself it shall at last expire
Like fire that meeteth fire."

—Epic of The Starry Heaven.

Lot Spiritualists resolve to have no fellowship with this beast. We can not be too strongly guarded against the prevalent tendency to sectarian forms, distinctions, and institutions. They tend to disturb the public tranquillity and to subvert the highest interests of the individual. Society has already suffered a cruel martyrdom from this cause; private virtue has had no power to subdue the fierceness of sectarian rancor, and even love has been crucified at Christian altars. But love, and truth, and virtue, are immortal, and armed with these, we must make war with the many-headed monster. It is related in fabulous history that Hercules destroyed the

hydra of old by cutting off his heads and cauterizing the wounds; in like manner Spiritualism, in its herculean strength, comes to smite the modern sectarian hydra, and by the application of divine fire to destroy its power and its life.

AT A CONVENIENT DISTANCE.

We learn, through more than one channel, that a public lecturer, calling himself Dr. B. Brown Williams, has stated in his lectures at the West that he had challenged Judge Edmonds and himself to a discussion of the spiritual claims of the Manifestations, and that we had both declined the interview. The writer can not speak for his Honor, not having consulted him, but so far as the declaration is personal to himself, it is, to the best of our knowledge and belief, destitute of the slightest foundation in truth. We only know Dr. Williams in a very general way as a successful experimenter on the minds and nervous systems of people in the production of what are commonly denominated the psychological phenomena; the Doctor, we believe, employs the term "Mental Alchemy," doubtless for the sake of appearing original. By this means he comes to be regarded—of course by those who know little or nothing of the subject—as the founder of a new science. But we do not care to damage his pretensions to a new discovery by further comments. We, however, authorize our friends to say that we never received any written communication of any kind from Dr. Williams; nor did he ever, in any other manner, either directly or through the instrumentality of a third party, challenge us to a discussion of any subject whatever. When he does, we shall probably be ready to accept on the following conditions:

1. Dr. Williams must reconcile his statements now under review with the truth.
2. He must find a respectable number of the more intelligent and influential opposers of Spiritualism, either theologians or men of science, who will induce him as a disputant in whose hands they are willing to rest their cause.
3. On account of the extreme difficulties which the case manifestly involves, we are disposed to give the Doctor as much time as possible; but there must be some limit to all subliminal contracts, and accordingly we stipulate that the terms and conditions herein named must be complied with within the period of ten lunar years, or one hundred and thirty moons next ensuing the date of this publication, as we may possibly conclude to retire to private life after the expiration of that period.

Here is the letter of one correspondent:

DR. B. BROWN WILLIAMS AND SPIRITUALISM.

PITTSBURGH, March 23, 1854.

Sir—Dr. B. Brown Williams was here some three weeks since and while lecturing on Mental Alchemy he stated that he had challenged J. W. Edmonds, S. B. Brittan, and others, to come out and discuss Spiritualism with him, and that he had offered to rent the hall and pay all expenses, but not one Spiritualist dare come out to meet him. He threw out the same challenge here to any Spiritualist, giving out that he would show that it was all a nervous condition of the body. I had just concluded a course of lectures in this city on Anatomy, Physiology, Phrenology, and Psychology, and in conclusion gave three lectures on Spiritualism. This was at the time that Williams gave the challenge. He further stated that he would rent the hall he was then occupying and let the audience come in free. My friends here induced me to accept his challenge. After I had done so he backed out, saying that it was Judge Edmonds, or some champion he would go on, but as it was not, he did not wish to incur the expense. I then offered to rent Cargo's Hall and pay all expenses myself if he would come and discuss the subject. What did he do? why, he backed out clean. He is something like Dr. Rice of St. Louis; he could bluff off a Brownson, but when it came to a Spiritualist he had to back out.

Yours, fraternally,

I. D. CAMPBELL, M. D.

SPIRITS ARTISTS.

It is well known to most of our readers that the Spirits have, of late, in a number of cases, manifested a disposition to ultimate their thoughts in various artistic forms, executed in this sphere, often through the mediumship of persons who know nothing of the rules of Art, and are wholly unpracticed in the use of its implements. These curious exhibitions of spiritual agency have not failed to interest a number of intelligent persons, and we learn that several gentlemen, in this city and elsewhere, are about to associate themselves together for the purpose of promoting the objects which the Spirits seem to have in view. As an initiatory step, it is proposed to employ the time of Mr. Josiah Wolcott, through whom the Spirits have already commenced to embody their conceptions on canvas. It should be borne in mind that Mr. Wolcott himself does not claim to be an artist, and it is not pretended by his friends that he has as yet executed any thing that will pass the ordeal of severe criticism. If, however, our readers will examine the frontispiece to "Edmonds and Dexter's Spiritualism," they may be able to form some conception of what may be done by the invisible agents which operate through him.

Mr. Wolcott's last effort is a representation, on canvas three feet by four, of Judge Edmonds' vision, which will be found recorded on page 289 of his late work. The picture is at this office and may be inspected by those who choose to call. We subjoin the following proposition by Mr. Brigham of this city, who is giving his particular attention to this enterprise: Josiah Wolcott, of Concord, N. H., being impressed to devote himself to the reproduction upon canvas of the spiritual visions himself and others have been favored with, and having accepted of the suggestions of his friends to give his services and the results of his labors for one year to an association which shall support him during that time, we, the undersigned, desirous and anxious that every avenue by which our Spirit-friends are struggling to communicate with us mortals may speedily be opened, and trusting that this movement will lead to the development of talent under like influences, and ultimately to the establishment of a Spiritual Art Gallery, which shall in its silent teachings and influences be alike refining, elevating, and instructive, have heretofore subscribed our names and paid the sums set against them with the understanding that as soon as a fund of five hundred dollars has been raised a meeting of the subscribers shall be held in New York city for the purpose of organizing the association thus projected.

Mr. Wolcott suggests that contributions to the proposed fund may be forwarded to himself, to Judge Edmonds, or to the Editor of this paper.

THE RING EXPERIMENT.

I have just read your remarks upon the facts stated by J. K., of Western, R. I., and I regret that he should have referred to the striking of a ring, suspended by a thread against the sides of a tumbler, as a spiritual phenomena, when the fact is notoriously known, and can be easily demonstrated, that the motions are caused by a slight, unconscious, but still real motion of the hand. I have often held it as steadily as possible, yet by willing it, it would move in any direction, or strike as many times as I wished or thought of, but when suspended from any thing stationary, as the ceiling or a mantle, it would not budge the infinitesimal part of an inch, although I willed it with all my might. Hence it was neither a mesmerism will force, nor a spiritual one, but a real, simon-pure muscular one.

Will J. K. do us the favor to suspend three rings from nails, say from

the lintel of a door: let the thread extend within two inches of the floor; place each ring in a tumbler, and then ask for answers through them as before, and if he obtains them I shall be compelled to admit the presence of an invisible intelligent power, which approaches very near to my conceptions of Spirits. Admitting the physical manifestations we read of to be true, he will probably succeed. Will he try it and report?

I think, with the correspondent of the *Inverness Courier*, that much of the table turning is referable to the same cause—a power unconsciously applied.

Yours, for truth,

BERNARD FAUTH.

REMARKS: We confess ourselves still "on the fence" in regard to the position discussed by our correspondent above, but think he imposes conditions upon the experiment proposed which may be somewhat unfair. It has, we believe, never been claimed by modern Spiritualists, that manifestations from invisible intelligences can take place, except in extraordinary cases, without the instrumentality of a nerve medium, or aura, connected with a person in the flesh; and a total disconnection of the experimenter with the threads, as proposed by our correspondent, might render it impossible for the Spirits (if Spirits there be in the case) to reach or act upon the thread. We would propose, therefore, that one person should be allowed to hold the thread in his hand, as was done by J. K., and that another person should then ask mental questions, or questions of which the first person does not know the answer. The results of such a test might throw some further light upon the subject.

REV. N. L. RICE AND THE SPIRITUALISTS.

We cordially yield to the request of our friends in St. Louis in giving publicity to the following psychometrical description of the personal, intellectual, social, moral, and religious characteristics of Rev. N. L. Rice, pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church of that city, as given by Mrs. J. R. Mettler, of Hartford, Conn., together with the explanatory observations of our correspondent. The character of the reverend gentleman, as given by Mrs. M., is certainly a good one, on the whole, the essential elements of reflection, benevolence, veneration, etc., being full and operative, while it will be perceived that those things which are likely to be regarded as defects in the character, belong rather to the surface than to the inward principles of the man, and that they chiefly depend on education and existing circumstances, which must be admitted to be unfavorable to disinterested and magnanimous action.—Ed.

PSYCHOMETRICAL PORTRAIT OF —

This letter gives me a kind of uneasiness, and rather a confusion of thought, as though at a stand occasioned from a want of definite ideas, or the ability to express my feelings and sentiments. It gives me a feeling of indecision and a desire. "If I only knew how exactly to approach the person or party addressed, I could there express myself." The writer seems to be in the mire, or in a quandary, accompanied with a little fear. I think that circumstances surrounding him may be the cause of this. The writer is a person of intelligence, and the spirit seems to be struggling to overcome external conditions, which now seem to cramp the mind and prevent its free expansion. He hesitates to express his sentiments in that open manner which accords with his desires.

His perceptive faculties are active and comprehensive. He has a good memory, combined with much reflection and knowledge, obtained from books and from observation. There seems, however, to be a lack of wisdom and spirituality, which give expression to the mind. He has considerable benevolence and sympathy, much originality of thought and expression, and if rightly directed might do much good. His veneration is large, giving him rather a religious turn of mind, and I think that from educational impressions the mind is strongly impregnated with sectarian feeling. I think he may be a preacher; at any rate he must be a public speaker. He venerates great men and their views, and might be governed to some extent by the opinions of the world. He has considerable combativeness and firmness, and in argument I think he would not be likely to be the first to retreat. Sometimes he might continue to argue even when convinced of his error, to gratify a kind of pride; especially if others were listening to the conversation, though when a convenient opportunity offered afterward, he would acknowledge his error.

He has considerable self-control and self-propelling power, and when he fully believes a thing, might exhibit considerable enthusiasm. He is exceedingly cautious and watchful in all the relations of life, and somewhat secretive. He is conscientious, and will always do right when he observes his inward promptings, though circumstances may sometimes prevent him from acting accordingly. He has good powers of concentration, and considerable ability to ascertain the true foundation of matters—is observing, and has rather a critical turn of mind. He has much poetical feeling and sentiment, is fond of the arts and sciences and a lover of Nature, and I think would be very fond of flowers. He is social in his feelings, is fond of home and domestic scenes and pleasures; at the same time he would be pleased to travel. I judge that he is fond of children and pets, and exceedingly fond of the society of woman. He can be very polite and winning in his manners—can express, in this way, on some occasions, what he does not really feel.

He loves the good things of life—is fond of money, and would set his energies to work to obtain it, though I do not think he would be penurious—might sometimes be a little selfish. He likes order and punctuality, and can calculate well. Form and constructiveness are full, and language is quite full. He is nice in his arrangement of his person—distinguishes colors readily—is a close observer of human conduct, though not always an accurate judge of human nature. His intellectual faculties predominate.

ANSWER TO AN ACCOMPANYING QUESTION.—I think his desire and motive was good when writing this letter or manuscript, though there was mixed up with it a little selfishness. There seems to be a lack of sincerity, accompanied with an exclusive feeling, and a predominance of self-esteem, individuality, and bigotry.

Given March 5, 1854.

The history of the above is this wise. While Dr. Brownson was in this city giving a course of lectures before the Catholic Institute, the *evangelical clergy* of the city (with but two or three exceptions) signed a challenge to him, and put forth Dr. Rice as their champion, which Dr. Brownson refused to accept, stating, among other reasons, that "the doctor was no gentleman, and unfair in his debates." Nevertheless, Dr. Rice (like the Irishman at Donnybrook fair) could not rest till he "got up a row" somewhere, and pluming himself upon his great controversial abilities, "pitched in" and had a fight all "on his own hook." Now Brother Finney was here at the time, delivering a course of lectures to the friends, and they thought that it was a pity the doctor could not get an opponent, therefore proposed Brother Finney to him as *able and willing to meet him*. The doctor declined to meet Mr. F., or to argue the question; but in his answer to the committee did attempt to argue all the time, and to cast as much ridicule and contempt upon the harmonical philosophy as his "limited powers" would let him. To which our Brother P. E. Bland felt called upon to reply at some length in the *Republican Intelligencer* and *Herald*, of this city, which document has been more generally read than any thing on our side in this section, and is confessed by friend and foe to have spiked the doctor's gun for all time to come. It was so thorough and complete that the learned disputant has not been able to attempt an answer.

Wanting to know further "what manner of man" this Dr. Rice is, I sent his reply to the challenge to Mr. J. R. Mettler, of Hartford (closely enveloped), and the above portrait is the result. It is conceded here to be correct. The friends in Cincinnati published the whole correspond-

ence in pamphlet form, and we have had one thousand printed here for distribution. It has placed us on a sure and permanent foundation, and has shown the world in this section that we are something more than "deluded fanatics."

Respectfully yours,

A. MILTENBERGER.

St. Louis, March 31, 1854.

INTERESTING LETTER.

Our esteemed friend and correspondent will accept our thanks for the subjoined favor embodying the letter from Dr. Franklin, which contains views as enlightened and honorable to the American philosopher as they are acceptable to the great body of American Spiritualists.

Should Brother Richardson find a leisure hour and an occasion to write a hasty letter for the *TELEGRAPH*, the readers, always including the editor, would, doubtless, peruse it with a lively relish.

MR. EDITOR:

My good friend, Captain Watson, of the Navy Yard, Chelsea, a gentleman of various information and liberal thought, who was very early interested in the subject of Spiritualism, was kind enough to point out to me, at his house this morning, in Epes Sergeant's new and entertaining volume of Franklin's Select Works, the following striking letter of that great philosopher, which I transcribe here for the benefit of your readers and the believers in Spiritualism generally:

TO MISS E. HUBBARD,

ON THE DEATH OF HIS BROTHER, JOHN FRANKLIN.

"PHILADELPHIA, Feb. 23, 1766.

"I condole with you. We have lost a most dear and valuable relation. But it is the will of God and nature that these mortal bodies be laid aside when the soul is to enter into real life. This is rather an embryo state—a preparation for living. A man is not completely born until he be dead. Why, then, should we grieve that a new child is born among the immortals—a new member added to their happy society?"

"We are Spirits. That bodies should be lent us, while they can afford us pleasure—assist us in acquiring knowledge, or in doing good to our fellow-creatures, is a kind and benevolent act of God. When they become unfit for these purposes, and afford us pain instead of pleasure—instead of an aid become an encumbrance, and answer none of the intentions for which they were given—it is equally kind and benevolent that a way is provided by which we may get rid of them. Death is that way. We ourselves, in some cases, prudently choose a partial death. A mangled, painful limb, which can not be restored, we willingly cut off. He who plucks out a tooth parts with it freely, since the pain goes with it; and he who quits the whole body parts at once with all pains and diseases which it is liable to, or capable of making him suffer.

"Our friend and we were invited abroad on a party of pleasure, which is to last forever. His chair [chaise] was ready first, and he is gone before us. We could not all conveniently start together; and why should you and I be grieved at this, since we are soon to follow, and know where to find him?"

Adieu,

"B. FRANKLIN."

Those of our Spiritual friends who have not met with this letter before, will, doubtless, be highly gratified to find views so beautiful and so dear to them, expressed during his earthly life, by the venerable and distinguished philosopher, who, in his lofty position in the upper spheres, is putting forth his benign influences to advance the cause so justly sacred and precious to their hearts.

JAMES RICHARDSON.

CHELSEA, April 11.

HUMAN MAGNETISM APPLIED TO DISEASE.

It will be perceived by reference to our advertising columns that Mr. W. Reynoldson, who has been accustomed to treat the numerous forms of disease by the use of what are variously termed Mesmerism, Electro-biology, and Psychology, has established himself at 190 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, where he may be consulted by those who desire such professional services. Mr. Reynoldson is recently from London, England, and the subjoined testimony from Dr. Ashburner should entitle his claims to respectful attention:

40 YORK PLACE, PORTMAN SQUARE, Sept. 5, 1853.

During forty years of hospital and of private practice, I have had very extensive experience in fevers and inflammatory diseases. I give a deliberate opinion that there is in such cases, no treatment to be compared for efficacy in cure, or in relief, to that holy gift of God known as Mesmerism.

In very bad cases of Typhus Fever, in Puerperal Fever, in which the accoucheurs of London lose so large a proportion of cases; in Inflammations of the Lungs, of the Liver, of the Bowels, and of the Kidneys; in Dropsies, and in Ovarian Tumors, in Scrofulous diseases of the bone and of the joints, it has caused dispersion of the disease and marvelous cures. I state these facts from close attention to the subject, and from personal knowledge of the truth.

I consider Mr. Reynoldson's power in the mesmerizing of such cases to be peculiarly advantageous, and should be glad to learn that he was employed by patients requiring so powerful an agency.

JOHN ASHBURNER, M.D.

RELIABLE DREAMING.—Among the news items contained in the Los Angeles *Star* of the 4th inst., is one which shows that dreamers as well as others can make money. Colonel Reese and his train had, among other misfortunes, lost a considerable sum of money, but precisely where or in what manner was unknown by any of the party. On arriving at San Bernardino, Col. R. had a dream, in which the locality of the money was so vividly impressed on his mind, that he resolved to go back and find it. Some days after, Reese and his company returned to San Bernardino, having visited the spot indicated in the Colonel's dream, where they found the entire sum of money in a buckskin bag. There can be but little doubt that such dreams are inspired by the agency of guardian Spirits.

"INTERIOR SENSE OF THE WORD."—We desire to call particular attention to the article bearing this title, which will be found on the first page of our last week's issue. In our judgment it is one of Bro. Courtney's most masterly efforts, which is virtually saying that it is one of the very best things to be found in the whole range of contributions to the spiritual press. It is as lucid as sunlight itself, and will be read with pleasure and profit by thousands.

It will be perceived that our next number will close the current volume of the *TELEGRAPH*, and complete the second year of its existence. Now is the time to subscribe, and we have reason to hope that our circulation will be greatly extended. We shall issue No. 1, volume III., the first week in May.

MARRIED.

At South Manchester, Conn., on the 13th inst., FRANK L. BURR, Esq., of the United States Treasury Department, Washington—recently one of the editors of the *Hartford Times*—to Miss ELIZABETH W. MERROW, of South Manchester.

SPIRITUALLY BORN.

ROSWELL, son of Chandler and Evelina Partridge, departed the earth-life on the 14th inst., aged two years and eight months. The father of the deceased, who is a brother of one of the proprietors of this paper, had but recently removed his family to this city, from Templeton, Mass., to which place the remains of this child were removed for interment.

Love ye one another, MARCENES WRIGHT.

